

Message Text

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FOR CARTER FROM PA

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOPN, OVIP (VANCE)

SUBJECT: PRESS MATERIAL

1. HERewith FULL TEXT PETER OSNOS BYLINER IN WASHINGTON
POST DATED MAY 18 HEADED "ACCUMULATING IRRITANTS PERIL
DETENTE", PAGE A-18.

2. MOSCOW - WHATEVER COMES OUT OF THIS WEEK'S HIGH-LEVEL
US-SOVIET TALKS IN GENEVA--AND THE PORTENTS ARE NOT GOOD--
IT WILL BE DIFFICULT TO DISPEL THE ANIMOSITY TOWARD THE
UNITED STATES THAT HAS DOMINATED KREMLIN ATTITUDES IN THE
EARLY MONTHS OF THE CARTER ERA.

„ BARELY A DAY SEEMS TO GO BY NOW WITHOUT SOME OFFICIAL
-OVIET PROTEST OVER AN AMERICAN ACTION. THIS ENTAILS
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SUMMONING A SENIOR MEMBER OF THE U.S. EMBASSY STAFF TO
RECEIVE A FORMAL COMPLAINT AT THE FOREIGN MINISTRY ON MAT-
TERS SUCH AS PRIVATE SHOWINGS OF THE FILM "DOCTOR
ZHIVAGO" TO BROADCASTS BY RADIO LIBERTY AND THE U.S.
REFUSAL TO GIVE VISAS TO SOVIET TRADE UNIONISTS.

4. AMERICANS ARE DOING A GOOD DEAL OF PROTESTING ALSO:

ABOUT THE WAY, FOR INSTANCE, SOVIET POLICE HAVE BLOCKED ACCESS TO AMERICANS' APARTMENTS, PREVENTING RUSSIANS FROM ENTERING; AND ABOUT THE HARASSMENT OF JOSEPH PRESEL, A FIRST SECRETARY IN THE EMBASSY'S POLITICAL SECTION WHO WAS ACCUSED IN THE GOVERNMENT NEWSPAPER, IZVESTIA, OF BEING A SPY. PRESEL IS NOW FOLLOWED WHEREVER HE GOES AND SUBJECTED TO THREATENING TELEPHONE CALLS.

5. FROM AFAR, THESE MAY EASILY BE DISMISSED AS ROUTINE MATTERS COMPARED TO THE GREAT QUESTIONS OF WAR AND PEACE--STRATEGIC ARMS LIMITATION AND THE MIDDLE EAST--UNDER DISCUSSION IN GENEVA BETWEEN SECRETARY OF STATE CYRUS VANCE AND SOVIET FOREIGN MINISTER ANDREI GROMYKO. BUT THE ACCUMULATION OF IRRITANTS REFLECTS A MALAISE IN SOVIET-AMERICAN RELATIONS THAT HAS BECOME VERY PRONOUNCED, A REVERSION HERE TO ATTITUDES THAT PREVAILED BEFORE THE FIRST SUPERPOWER SUMMIT IN MOSCOW FIVE YEARS AGO THIS MONTH.

6. THE IMPLICATIONS ARE PROFOUND. SOVIET INTEREST IN ACCOMMODATION WITH THE UNITED STATES WAS BASED IN LARGE MEASURE ON IMPROVING COMMERCIAL TIES. YET FIGURES FOR THE EARLY MONTHS OF 1977 SHOW A DROP OF 25 PER CENT IN TRADE COMPARED TO LAST YEAR, MAINLY BECAUSE OF REDUCED GRAIN SALES. NONAGRICULTURAL TRADE IS COMPLETELY STALLED AT A RELATIVELY LOW LEVEL OF TURNOVER.

7. AS RECENTLY AS LAST FALL, SOVIET COMMUNIST PARTY LEADER LEONID BREZHNEV STILL SPOKE WITH ENTHUSIASM ABOUT THE PROSPECTS FOR ECONOMIC RELATIONS IF ONLY THE JACKSON UNCLASSIFIED

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AMENDMENT RESTRICTING THE TERMS OF MOST-FAVORED-NATION STATUS WERE WITHDRAWN. NOW THERE IS ONLY SULLEN SILENCE ON THE SUBJECT.

8. CRITICISM IN THE PRESS OF U.S. IMPERIALISM, AROUND THE GLOBE HAS BEEN RAISED TO A CRESCENDO THAT CANNOT BE MARKEDLY LESS THAN IT WAS IN THE DEPTHS OF THE COLD WAR--THE SORT OF PROPAGANDA BARRAGE THAT MAY WELL BE PREPARING THE SOVIET POPULATION FOR SACRIFICES THAT WILL HAVE TO BE MADE IF THE ARMS RACE IS STEPPED UP. LIFE IN THE UNITED STATES IS PRESENTED IN THE DARKEST TERMS.

9. IT MAY BE ONLY COINCIDENTAL THAT THE SOVIETS HAVE UNDERTAKEN IN 1977 THE MOST SWEEPING CRACKDOWN ON DISSIDENTS SINCE BEFORE DETENTE. BUT THE FACT UNDERSCORES KREMLIN ANGER OVER CARTER'S ACTIONS, PARTICULARLY IN THE FIRST FEW WEEKS OF HIS ADMINISTRATION, IN SUPPORT OF HUMAN-RIGHTS ACTIVISTS HERE.

10. MOSCOW MAY WELL HAVE MOVED ANYWAY BECAUSE OF ITS SENSITIVITY OVER RENEWED INTELLECTUAL UNREST IN EASTERN EUROPE AND A DESIRE TO SHOW FIRMNESS IN THE MONTHS BEFORE THE JUNE BELGRADE CONFERENCE, WHERE THE RESULTS OF THE HELSINKI ACCORD ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND OTHER ISSUES ARE TO BE REVIEWED. BUT THERE SEEMS TO BE NO DOUBT THAT CARTER'S INTERVENTION EXACERBATED THE SITUATION, PROMPTING THE KREMLIN TO BEAR DOWN HARDER ON THE DISSENTERS.

11. TAKE THE CASE OF ANATOLY SCHARANSKY, 29, A COMPUTER SPECIALIST WHO WAS THE INFORMAL SPOKESMAN FOR JEWS WHO HAD SOUGHT PERMISSION TO EMIGRATE AND BEEN TURNED DOWN. HE WAS ALSO ACTIVE IN THE UNOFFICIAL GROUP MONITORING SOVIET COMPLIANCE WITH THE HELSINKI PROVISIONS--A PRINCIPAL FOCUS OF THE CURRENT CRACKDOWN--AND HE OFTEN SERVED AS A TRANSLATOR AT DISSIDENTS' PRESS CONFERENCES.

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12. IN EARLY MARCH HE AND SEVERAL OTHER PROMINENT JEWISH "REFUSEDNIKS" WERE ACCUSED IN IZVESTIA BY A REPENTANT DISSIDENT OF WORKING FOR THE CIA IN COLLABORATION WITH SEVERAL AMERICAN DIPLOMATS. ON MARCH 15 SCHARANSKY WAS ARRESTED, AND OFFICIALS HAVE SINCE IMPLIED THAT HE COULD BE CHARGED WITH TREASON--ALTHOUGH THUS FAR HE HAS NOT BEEN CHARGED WITH ANYTHING. THE AFFAIR ALSO HAS ANTI-SEMITIC OVERTONES, MANY WESTERNERS HERE SAY, SINCE EVERYONE MENTIONED IN THE ARTICLE INCLUDING THE AMERICANS, IS JEWISH.

13. THE PURPOSE OF THE SCHARANSKY EPISODE APPEARS TO BE TO DISCREDIT AMERICANS AS AN ANSWER TO CARTER'S CHALLENGE ON HUMAN RIGHTS. CERTAINLY SO PROVOCATIVE AN ATTACK ON U.S. ACTIVITIES IN MOSCOW WOULD NOT BE CONSIDERED EXPEDIENT IF RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES WERE BETTER. THE SOVIETS GAUGE THAT KIND OF HOSTILITY TO OVERALL RELATIONS--AND AT THE MOMENT THE HOSTILITY GAUGE IS UP VERY HIGH.

14. HOW MUCH THE BITTERNESS WILL AFFECT SOVIET POSITIONS IN GENEVA IS HARD TO SAY--IF ONLY BECAUSE SOVIET SOURCES SEEM SO MUCH WARIER WHEN TALKING TO AMERICANS THESE DAYS.

15. WESTERN ANALYSTS REPORT THAT THEY HAVE SEEN NOTHING TO INDICATE THAT THE KREMLIN IS PREPARED TO MODIFY ITS REJECTION OF TWO AMERICAN SALT PROPOSALS PUT FORWARD WHEN VANCE WAS IN MOSCOW SIX WEEKS AGO. NOR, THEY SAY, IS THERE A SIGN THAT THE SOVIETS WILL PRESENT A PROPOSAL OF THEIR OWN ASIDE FROM THE ONE BASED ON THE VLADIVOSTOK

UNDERSTANDINGS OF 1974 AND REJECTED BY THE UNITED STATES.

16. "IF EVERYONE SIMPLY REITERATES WHAT WAS SAID IN MOSCOW AND WASHINGTON," ONE WELL INFORMED SENIOR DIPLOMAT COMMENTED, "THEN NOT MUCH TIME IS GOING TO BE DEVOTED TO UNCLASSIFIED

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SALT. THERE WON'T BE MUCH TO SAY."

17. TO MAKE HEADWAY ON THE MIDDLE EAST, VANCE AND GROMYKO WILL EXPLORE WHETHER RECENT SOVIET AND AMERICAN TALKS WITH ARAB AND ISRAELI LEADERS GIVE GROUNDS FOR RECALLING THE GENEVA PEACE CONFERENCE. SUCH A CONFERENCE WOULD ENTAIL, HOWEVER, A SPIRIT OF SOVIET-AMERICAN COOPERATION. AND THAT SPIRIT, AS SEEN FROM HERE, IS DECIDEDLY LACKING. (END TEXT) CHRISTOPHER

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